



Post-16 Pathways information for students and parents

There are a number of options available to you after leaving school. These include:

- studying for qualifications such as A levels, vocational courses such as BTEC Diplomas or T-Levels.
- Becoming an apprentice
- Employment that includes training

It is important to consider your preferred learning style when considering studying at college.

A levels

A levels usually focus on academic subjects. A levels include a wide range of subjects including some that you have studied at GCSE and also new ones. A levels are highly valued by employers and universities and provide opportunities for further study and careers. Like GCSEs, exams are taken at the end of the two years' study. Generally, you will need at least five GCSEs at grades 9-4 and may need a grade 5 or above in the subject you wish to take at A level. This varies so you will need to check this by referring to the college course entry requirements.

A levels are two year courses that are exam based. Please refer to the Russell Group website www.informedchoices.ac.uk which gives advice about essential or useful A level subjects required for certain degrees if you are aiming to apply to one of the more prestigious universities. A levels can lead on to a degree or an apprenticeship.

Vocational qualifications

Vocational qualifications like BTECs are more practical and include coursework, assignments, written tests and often work placements. Vocational courses are aimed at a particular area of work. Diplomas, T levels and BTECs are ideal for students with a vocation in mind and who have a practical and hands on learning style. These qualifications can also lead on to a degree or an apprenticeship.

T-levels

T-levels is a new qualification that is equivalent to 3 A levels. It is a two-year qualification which brings the classroom and the work place together. It includes a 45-day work placement. T-levels that will be available from September 2020 are Construction, Digital Production and Education & Childcare. T-levels offer a pathway to employment, higher apprenticeship or degree. Please see www.gov.uk/dfes/t-levels for more information.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study.

As an apprentice you will:

- Work alongside experienced staff

- Gain job-specific skills
- Earn a wage and get holiday pay
- Study towards a related qualification (usually one day a week) You will need to find an employer who is willing to offer you an apprenticeship.

You will need to register on the National Apprenticeships website, www.apprenticeships.org.uk; ask family, friends etc about who might be able to offer an apprenticeship; contact businesses to enquire if they would be likely to have an apprenticeship vacancy; apply to colleges for apprenticeships.

Traineeships

A pre-apprenticeship programme that supports students who would like to be an apprentice but may lack confidence and experience and the required grades. Students attend extra tuition in classrooms, gain work experience and receive support to secure an apprenticeship.

When considering your options, think about your current situation, what planning you have already done, and anything you might like to change in order to achieve your ambition.

Research the qualifications or additional qualifications and experience required for the career you are interested in.

Careers Resources

To help you consider your options please refer to the following websites:

Careerpilot website www.careerpilot.org.uk is a free site that helps young people plan their future study and work. It is a great resource for young people, their parents/carers and also teachers and tutors, who are advising students about the full range of options. Consider completing the quizzes online as they can help you to consider suggested career matches.

The **National Careers Service** website www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk provides information, advice and guidance across England to help you make decisions on learning, training and work. The service offers confidential and impartial advice and is supported by qualified careers advisers.

For information on apprenticeships, what they involve and how you can find one, follow this link www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

It is important to consider your next steps so take a look at the courses available at the local colleges by looking at their websites:

www.btc.ac.uk

www.huish.ac.uk

www.thepacesomerset.co.uk

For information on degree courses see www.ucas.com

There are many more websites to explore. Check these out on Grofar. Go to <https://auth.grofar.com/> to log in to your student passport. You just need to use your school computer password.